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THE  
Dean of *Hereford's*  
SERMON  
Before the  
QUEEN,  
*March xxiii. 169 $\frac{3}{4}$ .*

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THE  
DEAN OF THE  
SCHOOL OF

A  
S E R M O N  
Preach'd before the  
Q U E E N,  
A T  
W H I T E - H A L L,  
M A R C H xxiii. 169 $\frac{3}{4}$ .

By *JOHN TYLER*, Dean of *Hereford*,  
and Chaplain in Ordinary to Their MA-  
JESTIES.

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L O N D O N,

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the  
Q U E E N.

I JOHN iii. 3.

*And every man that hath this hope in him,  
purifieth himself, even as He is pure.*

THE Apostle having concluded the former Chapter with defining, who is a Child born of God, viz. Every one that doth Righteousness, does begin this Chapter in setting forth the dignity of such righteous Persons. Next in shewing their future glory; And then the Excellent Fruit, which the hope of this Glory does produce.

The Dignity of such righteous Persons is taught us in these words: *Behold what manner of love the*

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Father

Father hath bestow'd upon us, that we should be call'd the Sons of God, v. 1. What an honour was it to Moses, a poor exposed Child, to be adopted by Pharaoh's Daughter, and treated as her Son in the Court of *Ægypt*? Yet little was that, or any other Earthly Honour, in comparison of that, whereby the Most High God is pleased to call Sinful and Mortal Men his Sons, to breed them up in his Family, and bestow on them the marks of his Fatherly and Fathomless Love. 'Tis true (saith the Apostle) *the World knoweth us not, because it knew him not*. Men that neither know nor fear God are not like to honour his Servants, yet is not our felicity and honour the less for that. Nor will our Condition stop long here. There is somewhat better intended us by our Heavenly Father, which will make our Relation and Dignity conspicuous. Hereupon he proceeds next to shew their future Glory in the second Verse: *Beloved now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*. Then follow the words of my Text, *And every man that hath this hope in him, &c.* Where we see, that the hope mention'd in the Text relates to the foregoing words, and is not to be well understood without a more particular consideration of them.

*Beloved,*

*Beloved,* now are we the Sons of God, &c. The sense hereof is: That we are now indeed in the state of our Pilgrimage, subject to a thousand Troubles and Misfortunes, and so in a State, that seems not so futable to the glory of the Sons of God. But this State cannot last always, we are now the Sons of God, and shall therefore be receiv'd into our Father's House and Family, with all the marks of Honour becoming so great a King and Father. What we shall be hereafter as to the particulars, is not yet revealed. But this we are sure of in general, That we shall become like to God, and therefore nothing, we can desire, will be wanting to us. Nothing can be conceived more perfect and blessed than God. If we shall be like him, our Blessedness must surpass all *that Eye has seen, or Ear heard, or ever enter'd into Man's Heart to conceive.* To conceive any thing equal to him is Blasphemy and Idolatry; But we shall be like him, not only in Holiness, but in his Eternity and Blessedness.

And hereof, the Apostle subjoins the reason. *For we shall see him as he is.* Though there's nothing that does exist necessarily and is Sovereignly perfect but God, yet is there nothing we perceive with more imperfection and confusion. This happens not through any defect in him but in us; through  
our

our weakness, and the immensity of his boundless Glory. The Sun of all visible objects, through the brightness of its Beams, is the most conspicuous, yet is there nothing our weak Eyes can less steadfastly behold; No marvel then if that Majesty that shines with such matchless and endless Perfections and Glory, is so imperfectly beheld by the weak Eye of our Understanding. Whence the Apostle says, *We now see through a Glass darkly.* We see not so much the things themselves as the glimpses and images of them, or as others render *ὡς ἀνιμαται*, we perceive as in a Riddle, the solution whereof nothing but <sup>1 Cor.</sup> the future perfect Age can give us. *But we* <sup>13.12.</sup> *shall see him as he is.* This is but a plain consequence of God's adopting us for his Children; for how is it possible, that Children should be forever denied the most sweet and desirable sight and presence of their Father, that they should never behold him as he truly is in his own nature. Moses after all the most magnificent Symbols of the Divine Presence seem'd desirous to see God as he <sup>Ex. 33.</sup> was, when he thus address'd to him: *I beseech* <sup>v.18.20.</sup> *thee shew me thy glory.* But was Answered: *Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live.* Whence the Hebrew Masters inferred, That God was not to be seen such as he was in his



his glorious infinite nature in this Life, but this Vision was reserv'd to the next; which the Apostle that was rapt into the third Heaven, approves of in saying, *We shall then see face to face,* <sup>1 Cor.</sup> closely and clearly, *and that we shall know,* <sup>13. 12.</sup> *even as also we are known.*

Certainly such a Vision or Knowledge will not be a bare and ineffectual Speculation, but one so transporting and transforming, as will change us into the same Image from Glory to Glory, whereof *Moses* was a Figure, who being exalted to a kind of converse with God, though but by mediation of an Angel representing his Majestick Presence, had his Face enlighten'd with so much Lustre and Glory, that it dazled their Eyes that beheld it, and made them afraid to come nigh him.

We could never see God as he is, did he not first communicate an Immortality to our Nature, and qualify our Souls by proportionate Degrees of Purity and Holiness. To see God then as he is, is to be prefer'd to a close Union with him, which carries with it all the blissful Acts of Love and Praise, of Joy and Transport, and every thing else that can consummate our Happiness. We may gather what will be the blessed Effects of this Vision, when we remark what great Pleasures God hath founded only on meer Bodies, and Motion,

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and

and upon the fitness even of mean Faculties and their Objects. As for Example. Some Musical Instruments are but a little Wood, Guts, and Hair, and yet are these able to affect the Organ of Hearing, in such wise, that very ravishing Streins of exquisite Harmony result thence. If such vile materials are able to afford, by order of the great God, such fine Musick and Entertainment, what must be the transports of them, whose Happiness is founded on Almighty God's own Eternity, Infinite Excellency and Glory? If the little drops, scatter'd in the Creation, are able so much to delight Men, what will be their Blessedness, that are admitted to the Ocean of Infinite Goodness. If shadows give so much content, what will the substance and truth it self do! Then must all our inquiries and pursuits after good be at an end, when we see or (which is the same) possess closely the Sovereign good; for why should they search after any thing else, when God hides none of his Beauty and Goodness, but shews, *i. e.* communicates himself and his Glory, to Souls Sanctified and prepared before hand for them. This then that is call'd seeing God's Face, or seeing Him as he is, is the consummation of all Blessedness, without which, though we were Immortal, and had all the adjuncts of Immortality, there would be

be too much still wanting to our Blessedness; and we should remain unsatisfied, like *Abſalom*, who, though recall'd from Banishment, and permitted to dwell, in *Jerusalem*; was still restless and uneasy, because he saw not the King's Face. This then is the Glory of Angels in Heaven, That they always behold the Face of our Father; and this is Glory promised to the faithful on Earth, That they shall herein be made like to the Angels; becoming Righteous themselves, they shall see him that is Love, and Light, and Purity; and seeing him in his fathomless Glory, shall be, by so ravishing a Sight and Fruition, rendred themselves Glorious. This is what God does design and promise all his obedient Servants, what they long, and pray, and wait for.

The Apostle next teaches in the Text, The excellent Effect, which the Prospect and Hope of seeing God does work in men. *And every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself, even as He is pure.* The Effect of this *Hope* is *Self-Purification*.

In Relation to this Effect, we have *Two Things* laid down,

- I. *First*, The Certainty of it; And,
- II. *Next*, The Nature thereof explained.

I. We have the Certainty of it, explained in the Universality of the Subject, *Every man, that hath this hope* (no one excepted) *doth purifie himself*; this Cause never fails of producing this Effect.

II. The Nature and Explanation of this Effect, *Even as he is pure.*

This *Self-purification*, is an Imitation of God's Holiness; practising after the most excellent Copy: Some indeed will have the Particle *καθως* rendered causally, *because he is pure*. But our Translators have render'd the Word in its common Sence, as a term of Proportion or Similitude; importing, That such as hope to see God as he is, do begin on Earth *to be holy as he is holy*; as the assured and only Method, to attain the Supreme Glory they look for.

My Meaning is,

1. To explain the *Purifying* spoken of in the Text.

2. To shew that this does certainly attend a Divine *Hope*.

3. To deduce some Inferences.

I have already insisted on the *Hope* mentioned in the Text, on occasion of the Verse foregoing, to which it refers.

To

To *purifie ones self*, is to cleanse ones self from ones former sinful Courses. Sin has Two pernicious Effects on him that is abandoned to it.

*First*, It makes him appear a Criminal before God; subject to his Wrath for Transgression of his Laws.

*Next*, It dishonours and defiles the Soul, destroying that Force and Beauty, wherein consist its Excellency, and the Image of God. Some Sins indeed, as Adultery, Fornication, Sensuality and Intemperance, are more especially termed Uncleanneſs; filthy and reproachful Luſts; directly contrary to that Honour and Sanctification, wherewith every Man ought to *poſſeſs his Veſſel* or Body. Theſe Sins are the Pollution of that which ſhould be the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt by his Deſignment, *who hath not called us to Uncleanneſs, but unto Holineſs*. But there is not only a Filthineſs of the Fleſh, but of the Spirit too; ſuch as Pride, Faction, Envy, Malice, and the like, which pollute the Soul. All theſe evil Deeds and Affections are as ſpots and films in the eye, which incapacitate men for the Sight and Injoyment of God. And that Change, which the Chriſtian Faith and Hope makes in men, when they cleanſe themſelves from all this Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, is our Purification.

Nor

Nor are we to take any Offence at these words of purifying ones self, as if more were attributed to men than is fit : for sometimes the same effect is ascribed to God, and sometimes to man, subordinate to God's Grace. 'Tis by the efficacy of God's Spirit, the Faith and Hope, the Word works in Men, of *seeing God*; that such as before were Slaves of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, do purge themselves from their former Defilements, and being redeemed from their vain Conversation, live no longer to themselves and their former Lusts, but to him, who has wrought in them this happy Change. They do all which God requires on their part, to purifie themselves; *ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well*; employing their utmost and effectual endeavours, *to live soberly, righteously, and godly*.

*Lastly*, The Purity effected by the force of this Divine *Hope* is not external, ritual or imputative only, but a real Sanctity like that of God's.

'Tis true in this, as in all other Perfections, God is infinite and peerless; nevertheless by his Almighty Power and Grace operating on Men, they may resemble him in his Purity; having their Hearts and Hands cleansed by his Word and Spirit. And that appears,

2. By what is affirm'd in the Text. *Every man that hath this hope, &c.* Whosoever is endow'd with *this Hope*, does make and keep himself clean from all voluntary defilement, and endeavours by the Grace of Christ to wash away the corruption of his imperfect and sinful nature. This Christian Hope of the Blessed sight or enjoyment of God, and Self-Purification, are not to be divided asunder. In the Verse before the Text, the Apostle said, *That it does not yet appear what we shall be.* Whence some body might infer, That the study of true (though imperfect) Sanctity, would be cold, whilst our Happiness appears not. No saith St. *John*, Our Hope of so happy a State sufficeth for this effect. Though we see not God, if we Hope to do it, 'tis not possible but this must stir us up to follow Holiness, without which we are assured we can never see him. And hereof I offer three Reasons.

1. He that really hopes to attain any end, is of necessity disposed to take those legitimate and proper methods and courses, without which he sees his end is not possible to be obtained. He that hopes to see *Jerusalem*, must bend his course Eastward, and put himself into the way he believes will bring him thither, otherwise he does but trifle, and can never be said truly to hope it. In like manner



manner he that hopes to see God, because he is well assur'd, this can never be effected, by any course, but by making God his Pattern, and his Word, the measure of his Actions, he hates all false ways, and puts himself chearfully in that, which will bring him to the accomplishment of his hope and wishes. Let a Mans Prayers or Profession be what they will, if he does not purify himself, he hopes not for the fruition of God, but somewhat else on Earth. He plays the Hypocrite, and designs only to be seen of Men, the easiest to compass the booty he covets. He may seem to soar high as an Eagle, but his Eyes are fasten'd on some prey that lies on the ground. He that hath the Hope in the Text, does not content himself to cleanse the outside, but the inside also, because he is well assur'd that Hypocrisy does absolutely dis-able him, 'tis purity of heart alone that fits him for the Vision of God.

2. This Hope has for its object a good so sublime and excellent, that one cannot possibly despise it, but desire it rather so vehemently, as not to omit any thing, particularly purifying ones self, by which 'tis attained. A Life for ever spent in the sight and presence of Almighty God, is such and so great a good, that we cannot conceive, either how God himself can give, or Man receive  
any



any greater or better : and therefore when thought attainable by any one, it cannot have less force, than to move him to love and pursue it, with intense and vehement Endeavours ; and not only to slight all the Offers of the World that would turn him aside as silly Trifles, but even to hate and fear them as most deadly Traps and Snares. He knows there's no such trouble in purifying himself, as is any ways to be thought of, or compared with so vast and essential a Good. If Men, when they hope thereby to attain the transitory Goods and Delights of this World, put themselves forward to do or suffer any thing, whereby they may compass them ; surely they that see somewhat better than the whole World to be had, namely, the Injoyment of its Maker, will find no such Mortification in purifying themselves, in order to so sovereign a Happiness.

3. This Hope does easily vanquish all Temptations to Defilement ; for this Hope does elevate the Soul to things above ; and makes that things on Earth, which are the only Baits to pollute the Soul, seem but mean and ordinary ; in such wise, that the Pleasure that flows from them is in comparison inconsiderable. But where the things on Earth appear in a manner so despicable, that the Heart is no ways captivated by them, there's little or no occasion or temptation to pollute

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lute either Body or Soul. Sin is of it self so base and filthy, that were it not sweetned by these earthly things, it could not easily entice us; where then its Sweetens are little set by, it will look not only little tempting, but rather hateful and abominable.

I come now to the Application, and infer,  
(1.) Mankind is infinitely beholden to the Grace of Jesus Christ the Prince of Righteousness, for rescuing them from the filth and drudgery of Sin into a State of Liberty and Holiness, by the Prospect and Promise he has given Men of reformed Manners, to be raised to the Fruition of God, our supream Happiness.

'Tis true, the superlative *Greatness* and *Goodness* of God do recommend Him as the Object of our dearest and highest Hopes. 'Twas the Consideration hereof, that moved his ancient Servants, as well before as under the Law, when they had no such clear and distinct Promise thereof, to expect a Blessed and Eternal Life from his Infinite Love and Liberality. This made them look beyond all the poor Enjoyments of this momentary Life, for a City that had Foundations. Nor indeed could Wise and Holy Men ever think otherwise, but as He was the greatest and best of Masters, so would He magnificently reward his affectionate and diligent

gent Servants ; it being the first Point in Religion, *To believe there is a God* ; and the next, *That He is a Rewarder of those that diligently serve Him*. But 'twas God's Pleasure to have this revealed and declared more plainly by his *Blessed Son* ; in whom he has promised us *Eternal Life*, and sealed also that Promise by his *Divine Life* and *Miracles*, his *Precious Death*, his *Glorious Resurrection*, and *Triumphant Ascension into Heaven*. Hereby God begets us to a most lively Hope, and so gives us the most effectual Motive to Purifie our selves.

(2.) This serves to convince us, that the Paths of Piety are not so rough and difficult as they are imagined to be by Men destitute of this Christian Hope. It must be granted, that to purifie ones self is a very difficult, because ungrateful Work to such Men. To part with their impure Courses, seems all one as to pluck out their Eyes, to cut off their Right-hands and cast them away. To lay aside their Pride, Covetousness, Conceitedness, Envy and Malice, is to put off their corrupt Natures, which is not to be done without new Principles, Thoughts and Affections, with which they are not yet acquainted. But what seems almost impossible to these, is not only very possible, but even delightful to Men animated with Hope of God's Sight and Presence. The hope of a fair and plentiful Harvest, is of force enough

to make the Country-man go through all the Labour and Travail of Husbandry, and that with Eagerness and Content. Nor do the Fatigues of War seem insuperable, but supportable and easie enough, where are the well-grounded Hopes of Victory and lasting Advantages. Surely no Man that understands what is meant by *God*, but would think, I will not say the Works of Christian Piety, but a thousand Deaths, very easie and desirable, if thereby one might be for ever admitted to his Sight, *in whose presence is life, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.* How exceeding pleasant then must the Course of his Life be, who rests well satisfied, that he shall be thus admitted, and that upon the easie and honourable Conditions, of purifying himself from his vicious Courses, the very Blots and Reproaches of his Nature. This very Hope makes *the pure in heart* more than amends for all the Filthiness it lays aside, were it but in the innocent and unfading Delights it here produces.

(3.) Why may not the Assurance of this Hope be inferred from its Divine Effects? If this Hope is of force to purifie us, surely 'tis of God, and therefore can never be confounded. *Truth and Goodness* (says one) *differ but as the Seal and its Impression.* If then the Impression be Goodness in its Excellency, the Purification and Exaltation of our Nature; the  
Seal

Seal must be no other than Truth. If there be any thing on Earth, worthy the Eye of God, his Favour and Acceptance, it can be no other than what is termed in the Text, the purifying ones self. This is the best and noblest use of our Wills and Freedom, the renewing of the Divine Image, and the highest Accomplishment of our Nature. If then that Hope which raises us to the greatest Perfection and Excellency, whereof we are capable, may be founded on Deceit and Falshood; then may an *evil Tree bring forth the best fruit, and men gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles*. These Hopes then are warranted by him, who cannot mock or deceive us. And hence 'tis that as our Hopes are stronger; so are we more careful in purifying our selves: so likewise the more careful we are in purifying our selves, the more chearful and vigorous will our Hopes be.

(4.) We must either set a purifying our selves, or lay by our hopes of a happy Immortality in the Vision of God. This Blessed sight and our purifying are annex'd inseparably. He that hath this hope, doth purify himself; he that doth not purify himself, doth in effect renounce all his hopes, and makes it impossible for him ever to see God; but he must be driven from his presence, and all that is desirable for ever.

Behold the choice is now before us. We must  
either

either renounce our Hopes or our Vices. And if we part with these sure and certain, these sweet and Heavenly Hopes, what is it we take up with in lieu of them? Is it the present gains and pleasures of Sin? and that too, only because they are present? Let us never forget, that what is now present, will not continue so long, for this World and the Lusts thereof, will pass away as a shadow; but what is now future, will be shortly present with us, and continue so too for ever.

If then poor and momentary things look so considerable and tempting, only because they are now present, what a dream and delusion will they appear to us, when they are gone. And how transcendently glorious will the sight of God be, when being in it self, the height of all possible Blessedness, that becomes present also, and that a Joy and Glory too, never to be taken from us. Surely he makes a choice like a Child or Fool, that prefers a few Comfits or trifles in hand, before the reversion of a great and ample Inheritance. And he makes one far more foolish, who for any transitory satisfaction, parts with his Interest, in an Inheritance, not only superlatively excellent in it self, but which too never fadeth away. Such a one outdoes *Esau* in his improvident as well as prophane impatience, who for one Dish of meat sold his Birthright. The object of our hope is  
future



future, but the hope it self is present. This very Hope far surpasseth all our other present Possessions. 'Tis the sweetest part of our Prosperity ; 'Tis an Anchor in all our Adversity. In short, it yields a better income of Content and Peace, than all the present World is able to do. According to what the Apostle teaches us, when speaking of God, he says, *Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now you see him, not believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory,* 1 Peter 1. 8.

Let's never suffer this fair Hope to be torn from us ; let's never think any thing too much to do or suffer to secure and increase it. Let it be our daily work in the strength thereof to purify our selves ; and then doubtless, we that see darkly, shall see Face to Face, and our Hope will be swallowed up in the Beatific Vision.

I conclude all in the Words of a Collect of Our Church :

*God of his Infinite Mercy grant, that by Patience and Comfort of his Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed Hope of Everlasting Life, which he has given us in his Son Jesus Christ. To whom, &c.*

F I N I S.

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